



Chickadee Chat

December Newsletter 2010

Just a Thought...

Interactions are always fascinating, whether it be people or birds. I find the goings on in our backyard extremely entertaining. Our backyard birds are always trying to live together and in this cold weather, their "pecking orders" become even more apparent. The jays and squirrels are a prime example - forever chasing each other over the same, elusive peanut. No wonder they need to eat constantly! But interactions aren't limited to them. Juncos and goldfinches are forever squabbling and fighting with each other. With them, there is never a real winner as the pecking order is always changing. Chickadees, on the other hand, never seem to fight and bushtits, well, they are always happy!

Our backyard is a moving tapestry of birds trying to survive. From the chickadees with their "grab and run" approach to the evening grosbeaks that descend on masse and eat everything, they all have their different approaches to life. And surprisingly, most of the time they get along fine. Small birds dash in between the



feedings of the larger birds and all listen for the jays' call of warning for approaching cats or hawks. They have learned to get along together because they must; all have their place in the big scheme of things. And as the holiday season approaches, I find myself wishing that we could do the same. Maybe in the future, we can be as smart as our birds.

Merry Christmas from
Cliff & Sherry

Anna's Hummingbirds

It appears that Anna's hummingbirds are more prevalent this year. According to our customers, there are not just birds returning to their old territories but many new sightings in Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Hope as well. Here are some tips for people who are "winter hummer rookies" (and a refresher course for the rest of us as well!)

- : Anna's hummingbirds appear in November and stay until February.
- : Anna's feed on small insects, nectar from winter flowing plants like winter jasmine and Christmas rose, sap from woodpecker holes and of course hummingbird feeders.
- :The sugar solution can be changed to 3:1 in severe winter conditions.
- :When the weather turns very cold, the sugar solutions can freeze. Bring the feeder in at night and return it outside at first light. Either use an existing outside light or place a trouble light (use either a red or white



Male Anna's

bulb) by the feeder to prevent freezing. If you have a glass feeder, you can also use the heating tape that is used around pipes to prevent freezing.

:If you have an Anna's hummingbird this winter, please contact us during the Christmas Bird Count at either store or email

me at sajury1@shaw.ca.



Are You Ready for Winter?



Winter on the West Coast means we can experience almost anything - rain (and lots of it!) usually but this year has seen winter appear with a gusty north wind and snow. No matter what the weather, birds need help during this winter months. Here are some tips that will help you keep your birds healthy,

- 1) Do not overfill your feeders. This is a good idea no matter what type of seed you are using. By giving the birds only as much seed as they can eat in a day or two, you will prevent the feeders from turning into a gummy mess if a big rainstorm rolls through. It will keep your feeders cleaner and prevent diseases caused by birds eating wet and moldy seed.
- 2) Keep the feeders under cover. Use either domes or move your feeders underneath your eaves for the winter. It will not solve all your moisture problems - unfortunately even our damp air can cause your seed to become moist and wind-blown rain is impossible to stop - but it will help.
- 3) Clean your feeders frequently. In our normal winters, feeders need to be cleaned every 3-4 weeks, more often if the weather is really bad. Use hot, soapy water and a good brush to clean your feeders thoroughly. If necessary, add a small amount of bleach to your water. Rinse well and dry thoroughly before using.



- 4) Keep the area underneath your feeding stations clean. Bird droppings, discarded seeds and shells in wet weather can cause mold and bacteria to grow. It also is a perfect breeding ground for any diseases the birds may be carrying. Rake up and dispose of any debris under the feeders. If necessary, you may need to move your feeding stations to a new area.



- 5) Feed good quality bird seed and suet. Do not endanger your birds by feeding them cereal grains and low caloric suet - foods like these mean that the birds expend more energy obtaining the food than they receive eating the food. High oil seeds like black oil sunflower or sunflower chips and high caloric kidney suet give the birds necessary calories and fats needed for their metabolism. High energy foods also keep their plumage in optimum condition, necessary for warmth in winter.

Christmas Bird Count

Christmas Bird Counts are fast approaching for both Abbotsford and Chilliwack. The data collected on these days are an important resource in determining the stability of the bird populations in our area. The dates for the event are: Abbotsford, December 27; Chilliwack, December 18; Harrison, December 15. For more information, go to the Chilliwack Field Naturalists website (www.chilliwackfieldnaturalists.com) and click on the contact icon. They are always looking for birders who are willing to brave the cold for a day of birding. You can also participate in the bird count from your own yard in the Feeder Watch Count. You never know what birds you might see, even from the warmth of your house.



www.backyardbirdingshop.com

New Products

It is always amazing that there can be so many new products for bird feeding! Just when you think that there is nothing new to discover, someone comes up with a new spin on an old product!

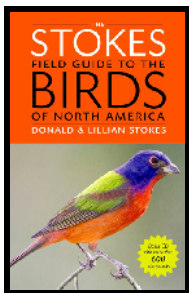
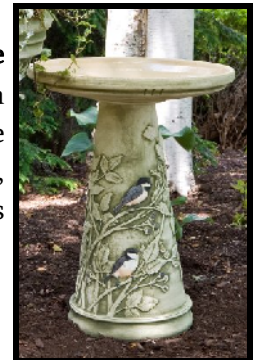
Metal Sunflower Chip Feeder: Sunflower chips are our #1 seed - everyone loves the “no-mess, no-grow” seed that appeals to all birds. This steel mesh feeder has the perfect size holes for chips; small enough to keep them from falling out and large enough for the birds to pull them out. The oversized flat metal roof and tray shelters it quite nicely from the elements. And the birds love it! It took no time at all for the woodpeckers, chickadees, juncos and finches to discover and clean this feeder out!



Seed Cylinders: Seed bells and blocks have been around forever.

The advantage to these items is that they give the birds their food in a small, feeder-free package. We now carry a new variation, Seed Logs from Pine Tree Farms (same company that makes our suet). Their seed logs come in tasty flavours like Fruit/Berry/Nut, Nutsey Blend and Woodpecker Log that are sealed in a bug proof container, making them great for storage. As the logs are held together with gelatin, they need to be protected from the rain so they don't fall apart. We have 2 different feeder styles available for these blocks, our favourite being the Aspect Vista-Dome; the roof protects it from the rain and the tray catches the dropped seed.

Burley Clay Products: Just in time for Christmas! These bird baths are available in different sizes and finishes. The glazed baths come with a locking bath top to prevent it from falling off when the raccoons come for a drink. The clay baths are green with hand-painted chickadees, goldfinches or hummingbirds. We also have hanging clay bird baths and clay planter pots as well.



Stokes Field Guide to the Birds of North America: The newest addition to the Stokes Birding Books. This pocket sized book features more photographs and more birding information than any of their other bird guides: especially helpful are the photos that show different plumage of immature and seasonal birds. Also included is a downloadable CD with more than 600 bird sounds and 150 photographs.

Backyard Birds of the West Posters: These informative posters show colour photos of our most common backyard birds, male and female. They are done by Stuart Clarke from Vancouver Island and are available in both paper and laminated. Mr. Clarke is an amazing photographer, please go to his website at www.raincoastphoto.com for more pictures like this amazing Steller's Jay.





*Mary Lake Thompson
Cardinal Flour Sac
Towels*

Gift Ideas

Winter and the holiday season will soon be upon us (just look at the snow on the mountains!) To help with your gift giving, we have brought in some unique items to please more than just the birder in the family.

Folkmanis Puppets: Always a favourite, this year there are more to choose from than ever! Popular items include the expanded Stage Puppets line (my favourite is the hippo and cow!) Hurry in for best selection, they won't be here for long!



Mary Lake Thompson: More styles to choose from this year, including some cheery Christmas chickadees, cardinals and new bird flour sac towels!



Jody Bergsma: For someone looking for west coast inspired gifts, look no further! You can now find her wonderful artwork on trivets, journals and coasters, as well as her durable coffee mugs.

*NEW from Jody Bergsma;
Chickadee & Squirrel and West Coast Heron*



Painted Art Glass: Every year we are amazed by the beautiful new additions the artists at Amia and Joan Baker come up with. And they come up in all shapes and sizes, from small suncatchers to vases, table stands, welcome signs and boxes.

*NEW Pansy Vase from
Amia*

*NEW Water Cut Sun-
catchers from Joan
Baker*



*Welcome Signs
Available in many
styles*



Heated Bird Baths and De-Icers: Weather man says it's a cold one coming! Ensure your birds get enough water with any of these handy products. Our De-Icers sit on the bottom of the bird bath and have an automatic thermostat. The heated bird baths come in either a pedestal, deck or screw-on model and a ground bird bath great for decks.



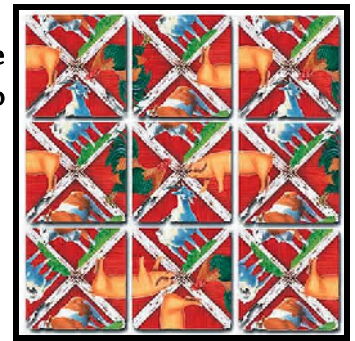
www.backyardbirdingshop.com

More Gift Ideas

Puzzles: Need something to do on a dark, cold night? We have a large selection of puzzles from the ever popular Scrabble Squares to kids puzzles to 1000 piece brain twisters.



Assorted Puzzles up to 1000 pieces



Farm Animals Scrabble Squares

Christmas Cards: Great selection of cards, both packs and individual, by Pumpernickel Press. If you are looking for an environmentally friendly way to say "Merry Christmas!" (all cards are on recycled paper with agri-ink), this is it.



Weather Stations: For the person who loves to know everything going on around them. These weather stations give temperature, humidity, weather forecasts, moon phases all from the comfort of your living room with the wireless monitoring station. Different models to choose from.



We have so many more items for Christmas gift giving, from bird feeders to bird houses to bird figures, that we just can't list them all! You will just have to come down and see for yourself!



PRE-CHRISTMAS BLOW OUT SALE

This year's Christmas sale is bigger than ever with great savings on many items throughout the store.



- Bamboo Jewelry
- Concrete Bird Baths
- Select Stained Glass
- Wheelhouse Socks
- Assorted Wall Decor
- Caruth Concrete Wall Plaques
- Select Birdhouses
- Assorted Giftware
- And much more!!!!



25% off regular price

Open Sundays until Christmas,
Starting December 5 to December 19! Hours 12-4

Backyard Birding

<p><i>#13-33324 South Fraser Way Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 2B4 Ph - 604-852-1960 Open Mon-Sat 10 - 5 Open Sunday in Dec 12-4</i></p>	<p><i>8810-C Young Road Chilliwack, B.C. V2P 4P5 Ph - 604-792-1239 Open Mon-Sat 10- 5 Open Sunday in Dec 12 - 4</i></p>
---	---